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The Deceitful Spirit discovered, in its secret and mysterious working; and in the Power of God is Judged and Condemned by one that was once ensnared thereby.

DEar Friends, I am constrained, even from the powerful working and sense of Gods Love in me, to write these Lines to you, and to acquaint you with the merciful dealings, and tender Visitations of Gods Love to me: Since I was with you at the Meeting, the Lord hath had mercy on me, even for his Seeds sake, and hath enlightned my understanding, and hath convinced me of the evil for which I stood, and his Light hath clearly shewed me, that that Spirit which had led me to keep on my Hat in the time of Friends being in Prayer, was not the right spirit, but the evil spirit. O dear Friends! how is my strength broken, my confidence spoiled, and all dashed? which that dark spirit had brought forth, and I am weak as water; this is the Lords doing, he hath done it when no man could; he hath had a good regard unto me: I am overcome in the sense of his Love to me, and your labour and love to mewards is made sensible to me. *O my Soul praise the Lord, for his goodness hath not failed thee; his mercies endure for ever. O let all the Righteous Seed praise him for ever.* This in the sense of the Work of the Lord in me have I written, who through mercy am your little Brother in the Truth,

William Cleevelye.

FRiends, since I wrote the former Lines to you, which was written and delivered to some Friends the first day of the sixth month, 1667. at the Meeting at *John Elsons*, it hath been laid upon me to write something more, by way of discovering the subtilty of that spirit which led me to the keeping on my Hat in the time of Friends being in Prayer: First, It led my mind out to be looking at others, and got my mind there looking at the backslidings and haltings of others, (of which indeed hath been too much.) Thus this Serpent-like spirit drew my mind out to be looking at the falling and back-sliding of others, that by it he might destroy that simplicity and young birth which the Lord brought forth in me: for while I was looking out, coldness and deadness got over me within; and my mind became darkned, and the pure Life in me clouded,

and Meetings unprofitable to me, and I found not the ſweet refreſhments at Meetings as before; and then the ſubtilty of this Enemy of Truth was ſuch, that he ſought to beget a belief in me, that Friends were grown formal, and that there was not that powerfulneſs in them of the Miniſtry as formerly. Thus when this ſubtile Spirit had darkned my underſtanding, in that dark underſtanding he would lead me to judge others to be formal, and without the Power; but whilſt I ſtood gazing at others, the Witneſs of God aroſe in me, and bid me, *Turn my mind to within*; and the Light ſhewed me that I was but formal my ſelf, and it judged me and troubled me; then the wicked ſpirit ſought to pervert the Righteous Judgement of Truth in me, which judged the bad in me, and ſubtilly did infuſe into my mind, that the putting off the Hat was formal, without the Power, and a cuſtomary thing only by moſt that did it. Thus being under judgment, for my formal appearing in the outwatd, being deadned within. Now the wicked one got a perſwaſion in me to keep on my Hat; but the Spirit of the Lord ſtrove in me much, that I was not brought to it preſently; yet this dark ſpirit having gotten ſome footing in me, the pure which once ſhone in me, became ſo vailed and clouded in me, and my mind ſo full of muddle, that I could not diſcern the good Spirit from that which wrought in the myſtery of iniquity; ſo that ſubtile ſpirit prevailed with me to keep on my Hat in the time of Prayer. But, *O what a croſs it was to the pure Seed of God in me!* (though then I did not ſo diſcern it) *O what pantings was in my heart and breſt*, like as it were an Hammer beating; *paleneſs got over my face, and I ſweat with the ſtrivings that was in me, at the time of my ſtanding with my Hat on*; and thus for many times was I, inſomuch that a queſtioning aroſe in me, whether I did wel or no? and ſometimes put my Hat off again. In this bewildered ſtate the wicked one, who worketh in the myſtery of iniquity, begot a perſwaſion in me, that it was in the croſs to my own will, and that I muſt ſtand in the croſs, and the like.

Thus when Gods Witneſs aroſe in me, and troubled me, (the which was croſt in me) then this Enemy of Truth, who had darkned my underſtanding, through my giving way to his ſubtile invaſions, got in me a perſwaſion that the croſs was to my own will; ſo there was a ſtriving in me, againſt the pure in me, which ſtrove for my good, and I came to keep on my Hat, and thought I did well in ſo doing; thus having gone from *the Light, which gave me a diſcerning between the good and the evil*, I took the evil for the good, there being a thick cloud got over me, and I could keep on my Hat with leſs trouble and more boldneſs; then was I perſwaded that I was at more peace with God when I could ſtand in the thing with leſs trouble; but the Spirit of the Lord would not leave ſtriving

ing with me, but pierc't through the Cloud, and *judged the deadneſs, hardneſs of heart, and unprofitableneſs*; then my peace was broken which the enemy of Truth had begotten in me; for the peace which I had was not durable, neither had I true ſatisfaction in it, but doubtings and queſtionings did ſtill ariſe; then I put it off again, and ſometimes put it off, and ſometimes on, as that ſpirit of confuſion (being let in) did ſuggeſt into my mind: thus being off, my watch, like the fool, with my eyes out of my head, the enemy ſoon got in and made ſpoyl of the good. And what did this enemy bring forth but *polluted dead things*, as I have declared, and *ſtirred up enmity*, and *ſtrove to beget prejudice* in me againſt Friends? But there was a ſweet Love ſprang up in my heart ſtill towards Friends, and the Light brought to my remembrance the abouuding goodneſs of God, which flowed forth from the Light through their Veſſels, by which I was refreſhed often, and ſtrengthned in the inward man, whilſt I kept faithful to my meaſure; the remembrance of which was as a bridle to me, and did likewiſe reſtrain me from breaking forth againſt Friends, when the enemy tempted to it: for when the Lord had ſtirred up his Servants to ſeek me, and in the Light found me *in my ſcattered loſt ſtate*, and reproved me, and exhorted me that I might return; I did not render railings, neither uſed many words, though I had in my reaſon comprehended much to plead for the thing aforementioned; but the Power of the Lord ſtood over me, and fear fell upon me, the Witneſs being reached in me, from that of God in them, yet *many ſhifting words did break forth to ſave that alive which was for death*; but when I came to commune with my own heart in ſtilneſs, waiting upon the Lord, the Witneſs which was reached in me break through the cloud, and in its Light made manifeſt the foundation upon which mine enemy hath builded, and judged the ground, and all the fruit that it had brought forth: Thus was I convinced of my error *by the Immortal Light*; then joyning to that which convinced me, I was made to ſee my own weakneſs and nakedneſs; then ſorrow ſeized upon me, yet Joy ſprang up from the pure Seed in me, and in the ſorrow and joy of my heart, was I made to take ſhame to my ſelf, and to declare to Friends my error, and alſo the goodneſs of the Lord to me, and conſulted no longer with my own fleſhly reaſon; then the Spirit of the Lord aroſe in me, which had lain grieved and oppreſſed in me, and judged the *uſurping Oppreſſor down*, and in his Light made manifeſt to me his deceivable wayes, and working with me. And dear Friends, notwithſtanding that which I have wrote to you before upon my convincement, it hath further been laid upon me, and I was preſt in my Spirit to write what I have here wrote, as the Lord in his Light hath brought to my remembrance; who in mercy and long-

ſuffering hath begotten me, and hath broken my heart, hath rent the Vail, and raiſed up the head of the oppreſſed; he hath pluckt my foot out of the ſnare, he hath judged the Oppreſſor. *O go on, is the deſire of my Soul, in thy Righteous Judgment, O God, till all be deſtroyed in me, which the enemy hath brought forth; then ſhall I praiſe thee from the pure in the heart, for thou art worthy. O Lord God thou haſt mercy on me, even for thy Seeds ſake, which breathed after thee, and could not be ſatisfied in any thing but the injoyment of thy living Preſence. O Lord, when I was ſcattered thou ſoughteſt me out, and art bringing me even to thy fold, to feed with thy Lambs again, praiſes be unto thee; O let the Righteous Praiſe thee for ever, O Lord God of my Salvation.*

Written by my own hand, and given to
be read at the *Meeting*, the 23. day of
the ſeventh month, *William Cleevelye.*

The deſire of my heart is the good of all, and my end in this my writing, is not to applauſe or ſet up the Perſon of any, but muſt give the glory to God, who is the Fountain of all good, and hath of the riches of his Grace given unto his Servants to be helps one to another, and I have peace in what I did write: Neither have I had any ſecret reſerve or aim at any thing but the honour of Gods Immortal Truth, and the good of ſuch who may be deceived as I have been, or in any other manner, by the ſubtile enemy, who worketh by divers wayes to deceive; and therefore let them to whom it may come, read it without prejudice, for I can truly ſay, That I have waited in the pure fear of the Lord for what I ſhould write, and durſt not to write any thing but what was Truth: But ſome may ſay, I might have forborn to have writ what I have. *To ſuch I ſay, Had not the Power of God laid it upon me I could have forborn.* The Woman when ſhe had found the loſt Groat, called her Neighbours that they might rejoyce with her.

W. C.

THE END. 68